Does the Tiger inhabit the Sudan ?

By

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(With one plate)

The tiger is known to range over Manchuria, Malaya, India, and to the borders of the Caspian Sea. It was once common in Armenia and possibly also inhabited Lebanon.

Since it has not been recorded from Africa it was with considerable surprise that in 1947 I noticed a freshly dried skin with unusual markings hanging in a skin shop in the Muski market at Cairo (Plate I). Its widely looped, trapezoid markings were different from those usual to many races of this feline. The shop-keeper assured me that it had been killed about three weeks previously in the Sudan. I photographed the skin, but since subsequent inquiry at Khartoum failed to confirm his statement the matter was dropped.

In November, 1950, while returning to Ceylon from England, a Sudanese fellow traveller from Omdurman, Mr. Awad Abdulla Ibrahim, who had been studying Engineering in Scotland, informed me that tigers inhabited the Sudan, and that he had seen several that had been killed there ; he was quite certain that they were specimens of the striped tiger and not of the spotted eopard.

In the Persian race *Panthera tigris septentrionalis* the stripes are akin to those of the specimen here described which supports the view that this skin is from an area close to Persia such as the Sudan, and not Indian. Should further inquiry reveal that a race of tiger inhabits Africa, the name *Panthera tigris sudanensis* might be conferred upon it. The specimen examined (Plate I) showed differences from the usual markings of tiger skins in possessing short, widely looped, broad stripes with light centres, best developed laterally and ventrally, and becoming shorter dorsally between the shoulders and hips ; in the outstretched skin they formed three roughly transverse rows, each comprising 6 or 7 such stripes. There also appeared to be less white upon the cheeks than in the Persian race.

Explanation of Plate

The recently flayed skin of a tiger that was stated to have been killed in the Sudan. The skin was photographed in the Muski market at Cairo in 1947.